

Remarks

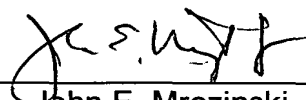
Applicants note with appreciation that in the Office Action mailed May 16, 2003, Claims 1-3, 5, 12 and 15 are allowed. Subsequent to the receipt of that Notice of Allowance, the art cited on the PTO-1449 form (U.S. Pat. No. 5,369,176) submitted herewith was brought to the undersigned attorney's attention. The German language equivalent (DE 691 14 702 T2) of this patent was cited in an Office Action from the German Patent Office in the German application corresponding to the instant case. Therefore, to ensure that the Examiner has an opportunity to consider this art, applicants are filing the instant RCE and submitting U.S. Pat. No. 5,369,176 for the Examiner's convenience.

Conclusion

Applicants have made no claim amendments as they believe the Claims are patentable over the cited and newly disclosed art.

Applicants submit that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested for Claims 1-3, 5, 12 and 15. If the Examiner is of the opinion that the instant application is in condition for other than allowance, she is requested to contact the Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below, so that additional changes to the claims may be discussed.

Respectfully submitted,

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